



Hackbridge & Beddington Corner  
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## **RESPONSE TO VALENCIA'S PROPOSED CHANGES FOR BEDDINGTON FARMLANDS RESTORATION**

Firstly, we would like to express the community's frustration with the further delays to the restoration of Beddington Farmlands caused by Valencia's apparent incompetence.

The fact that Valencia have taken nearly a year to conclude that consultants were needed to evaluate the CMS, demonstrates a lack of due diligence prior to taking on responsibility of the restoration.

This situation has now been exacerbated by their unwillingness to share key project and delivery plans for spring/summer 2023, which are vital for the CAMC to carry out their role in ensuring that the operator abides by the planning permission objectives.

Although the master planning workshop provided some good debate, it failed in its primary planning function, there were no proposed actions or timeline given and there was not even any indication of when we would see the output from the meeting itself, which is all very disappointing.

Consequently, with the 2023 delivery deadline looming, our confidence that the restoration will ever fulfil the aspirations of the local community are now at an all-time low!

### **Community Access**

In November 2020 we presented a proposal and cost analysis (see Appendix 1 below) that could enable Viridor to put in an application to vary planning conditions to move the Sustrans cycle path onto the permissive path, provide DDA compliant surfaced paths on-site and deliver the Wandle Vista panoptic view across to London.

Our extensive work included, meeting Sustrans, making site visits, engaging with the local community and considered the potential interconnectivity of these paths with the surrounding areas. The objective was to develop a mutually agreeable strategic plan that met the needs of both the community and Viridor. Our requests to discuss the access strategy for the site were ignored.

A year later, in November 2021 Viridor proposed a slightly different scheme, saying that it would work better with the landform. Completely understanding this, we requested a copy, having only seen it briefly via video conference, but this was never forthcoming.

Now, more than 3 years since we started this process, we were frustrated to see yet another access solution being presented, apparently disregarding much of our previous input and the specification detailed in the Section 106 Agreement. In addition, it also appears that resurfacing of the full length of the permissive path wasn't considered, something we have been championing since the start. The significance of these proposed changes were lost on the presenter, who seemed unaware that alterations to the pathways would require an application to change the planning conditions.

We are concerned that the new proposal is less than the agreed Section 106 Agreement and does not provide sufficient access to warrant the community to agree for the Sustrans cycle path to be moved onto the permissive path.

### **Key species**

It is now the beginning of the breeding season for 2023 and Valencia appear to have no plan for the immediate site priorities. We are very concerned that these further delays will see the loss of the Lapwing, the last remaining key species in the CMS objectives. There have been numerous discussions about how to secure the future of the Lapwing population, but we are at a critical point and action needs to be taken now!

It was frustrating to find that the solutions presented at the planning workshop did not include any suggestion of working collaboratively with Thames Water, who have confirmed they are happy to discuss 'anything' to help. It is therefore imperative that Valencia seize this opportunity to work with Thames Water to do everything they can to ensure the Lapwings are not lost.

Members of the community have previously spoken at the CAMC about their concerns for the future of the Lapwings and subsequently a petition was set up through Change.org and has gathered 66,902 signatures: [Save the Lapwings at Beddington Farmlands](#)

### **Water Management**

It seems ludicrous to us that Stantec's investigation did not consider utilising displacement habitats on Thames Water's land as an option for water management and we only hope that this is now undergoing some serious consideration by them.

### **Acid Grassland**

While there seemed to be a consensus that acid grassland would not be viable, a suitable replacement has not yet been agreed. It is however important that the management of this area is not left for yet another year.

### **Current Obligations**

We feel compelled to remind Valencia that they are still legally committed to deliver the current obligations and it should not be assumed that all requests for change will be granted and work on the restoration should therefore continue.

As communication is sparse, we formally request that you respond to our letter within 14 days.

## APPENDIX 1



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Neighbourhood Development Group



19 November 2020

### **Proposal to Viridor for access to Beddington Farmlands**

The Restoration Management Plan (RMP) did not have wider community input and consequently the access needs of the nearby communities were not given due consideration, we now see this as an opportunity to correct this omission. With only a few years left until the restoration is complete, we want to ensure that the access provided is to the highest quality and suitable for both locals and visitors alike, on par with other high profile nature reserves.

It is important to take a strategic look at how Beddington Farmlands links with the surrounding areas, so the community have worked together to provide a map of all possible interconnections and internal paths. (See below.)





## Current Obligations

The RMP approved deliverable access is for:

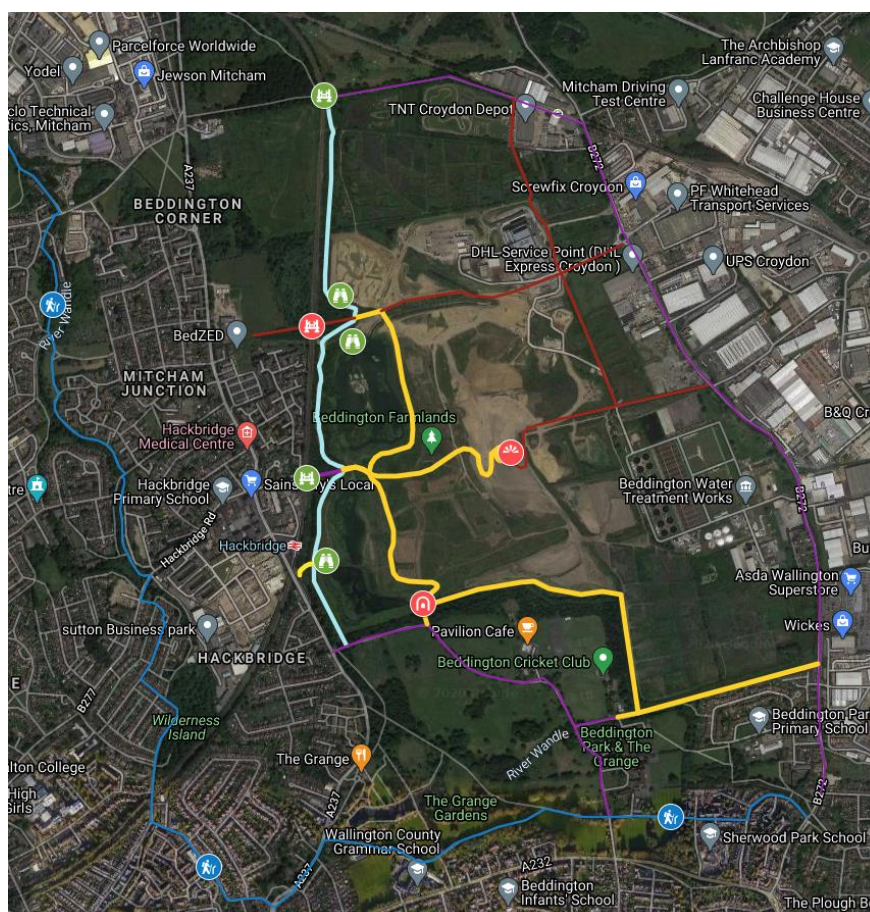
- Sustrans 'standard construction' internal north/south path, which would include the requirement for an engineered cycle/footpath bridge to provide access from the edge of the landfill to ground level at Beddington Park. (Viridor have highlighted that this option is no longer viable due to settlement issues.)
- Mown paths in the meadow areas

Viridor / SDEN obligations

- Requirement to reinstate the permissive path after the work is completed
- DDA access to the bird hides. (Note - the current gravel-based solution is not accessible.)

## Community proposed access routes

1. The community would like to propose 3 internal high quality 'made' paths highlighted in yellow on the map below:
  - North/south to Beddington Park, following a majority of the original Sustrans route, with the inclusion of a culvert crossing and the southern end
  - Mile Road bridge to Wandle Vista panoptic viewpoint, at the highest point of the landfill
  - East/west, from Beddington Lane, linked to Hackbridge via part of the north/south and viewpoint routes
2. Resurfacing of the permissive path and bird hide access (shown in light blue on the map below)



## Cost Analysis

As a result of Viridor's proposed changes to the RMP, we have completed a cost analysis to highlight Viridor's proposals and the local communities' access requirements. This analysis is the basis to open up conversation that will hopefully provide a way forward, that both Viridor and the community will agree to.

By taking measurements of each path from Google Maps and using material costs supplied by Sustrans and others, we have been able to make the following crude analysis. (Please note - we have used optimum path costs for all but expect many of the paths will be of lesser quality and therefore are assumed to be of a cheaper construction.)

Options	Route	Distance/m	Cost p/m	Total Cost
<b>Current Obligations - RMP approved plan</b>	Original Sustrans route*	1300	£200	£260,000
	Engineered Bridge (DDA compliant)**	100	£10,200	£1,020,000
				<b>£1,280,000</b>
<b>Community proposed Access Routes</b>	Original Sustrans route	1300	£200	£260,000
	Culvert crossing	7	£7,800	£54,600
	Permissive path	1700	£200	£340,000
	Beddington Lane to Park	605	£200	£121,000
	Sludge Lagoons to Culvert	955	£200	£191,000
	Mile Road Bridge to Wandle Vista viewpoint	739	£200	£147,800
				<b>£1,114,400</b>
<b>Viridor's possible changes</b>	Original Sustrans route	1300	£200	£260,000
	Culvert crossing***	7	£7,800	£54,600
	Permissive path	1700	£200	£340,000
				<b>£654,600</b>

### Costs from:

- \* Sustrans Path Specification Details for bonded bitumen surface and UK Government Department of Transport Publication 'Typical-costings-for-ambitious-cycling-schemes.pdf'
- \*\* Sutton Council estimated replacement of Irrigation Bridge (plus inflation) 'Printed minutes 30032017 1930 Environment and Neighbourhood Committee.pdf' and Gwynedd Council / YGC Publication 'Appendix 3 YGC Alexandra Road Footbridge Report Replacement Options Report.pdf'
- \*\*\* Similar Sustrans project (plus inflation)

## **Application to change planning conditions**

We understand that an application to change the planning conditions is likely to be submitted before the end of December 2020 and we are hopeful that we can work together to agree a proposal that will benefit both Viridor and the local community within that time.

We would expect any proposal to contain a planned schedule of work for all the agreed access routes on Beddington Farmlands, including delivery dates and submitted as one new planning obligation.

## **A positive way forward**

There have been many issues with the restoration of Beddington Farmlands over the years, but we see this proposal as providing a good opportunity for Viridor to be released from their current planning obligations, with the backing of the local communities.